On 2 February President Brazauskas signed a decree establishing a commission to analyze the citizenship situation of Lithuanians living in other countries. The commission was created at the urging of the World Lithuanian Community and is tasked with preparing a report to Brazauskas by 1 September, 1995. The commission is composed of 17 persons from the U.S., Canada, Australia, Russia, Argentina, Siberia, Germany and the Lithuanian government.

CEPA UNANIMOUSLY APPROVES LATVIAN MEMBERSHIP. The Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly voted unanimously this week to accept Latvia as a member. The only speaker opposed to Latvia's entry was Russian nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky, who claimed Latvia was not an independent state but part of Russia. Zhirinovsky also denounced Latvians as "illiterates" and "rudimentary farmers." Latvia is expected to join Estonia and Lithuania, as a full member of the CE on 6 February. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

HIJACKER IN ESTONIA COMMITS SUICIDE. Vladimir Buzhko, a 36-year old Russian locksmith who hijacked an Aeroflot plane in mid-November, hanged himself in a Tallinn psychiatric hospital on 28 January. Bozhko surrendered peacefully in Tallinn and sought political asylum. On 19 January, the Estonian government rejected his asylum appeal and on 26 January decided to deport him to Russia. Bozhko had threatened to commit suicide if he was returned to Russia. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE MEMBERS SIGN MINORITIES CONVENTION. Twenty-one of the 33 members of the Council of Europe signed an agreement on 1 February to develop a framework for protecting national minorities, Western agencies report. Signatories included Romania, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia and Lithuania. However, some council representatives called the document too weak and demanded an additional protocol permitting discrimination victims to appeal to the European Court of Human Rights. -- Michael Mihalka, OMRI, Inc.